
CONNECTICUT
EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE;
AND
RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER.

Vol. I.]

NOVEMBER, 1808.

[No. 11.]

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CON-
NECTICUT MAGAZINE.

REV. SIR,

AS you propose annexing an engraved likeness of my late valuable uncle to the Magazine of this month, I should be gratified to have it accompanied with the following biographical sketch, for which I am under obligation to the Rev. Joshua Bradley.

Your obedient servant,
J. R.

Hartford, Nov. 1, 1808.

Memoirs of Rev. Gardner Thurston.

COMMUNICATED IN A LETTER.

Dear and much esteemed Friend,

AS you have requested me to give you a sketch of the life of your venerable uncle, the Rev. Gardner Thurston, pastor of the second Baptist church, Newport, (R. I.) I most cheerfully inform you of what hath come within my knowledge con-

VOL. I. NO. 11.

cerning this useful and very much beloved man of God.

He was the son of Edward and Elizabeth Thurston, and was born in Newport, (R. I.) Nov. 14th, 1721. When he was but a small lad, some of his relatives in the country obtained him to tarry with them for a season, where the aged and religious were highly pleased to learn, that their little visitant had such a taste for devotion, that he was known to exhort his young associates to remember their Creator, and implore his aid whenever they formed any plan for enjoyment, and wished to be successful. To press his exhortation powerfully upon their hearts, and satisfy his own conscience, he was seen in their little circles praying to God. The pious kept these things in their minds, believing it highly probable that infinite wisdom had designed him to be an instrument of great good among mankind.

After he returned to Newport, and had been some time under

C c c

the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Whitman, and his colleague, Rev. Nicholas Eyers, he wrote them the following letter :

"Dearly beloved Fathers in Christ,

"Through the wonderful mercy of God, I am brought to see myself in a lost condition, and his word and my conscience testify that in such a state of nature, I am a child of wrath.

"Sirs, I consider that the gospel requires a positive change in all who will be admitted into the kingdom of God ; and that this change is new-forming the heart, and subjecting the whole man to the service of Christ ; that he may be transplanted out of the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Knowing my own weakness and inability to deliver myself, I find that I cannot do any thing pleasing to God of myself ; I cannot come to that true and saving faith in Jesus Christ, with which remission of sins is connected ; neither can I make satisfaction for the least of my transgressions ; therefore, O Sirs ! I desire to depend wholly and alone upon the free grace of God, in Jesus Christ, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. I am sensible that none but God alone can form Christ in me the hope of glory. Though I have been awakened to a sense of these things, yet Oh ! how have I risen up in opposition to his Spirit, from time to time, and gone on in a daily course of sin and disobedience ! By his rich grace, he is giving me time and opportunity to hear calls and warnings, from one day and time to another. Blessed invitations of

the gospel of the Son of God are still sounding in my ears ; yet great threatenings are out against sinners. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.

"The impenitent unbeliever shall perish : the wicked be turned into hell, and all the nations who forget God. Considering the way God hath pleased to reveal himself to men, even by the messengers of Christ, who are appointed of him to instruct us in his will ; and knowing the certainty of death and judgment ; I think it my indispensable duty, dear Sirs, to come to you for guidance in the things of God, that I may know and do the will of my heavenly Father, while the blessed Jesus is calling, and before the season is over and the harvest ended ; wherefore I beg an interest in your prayers, that God would be pleased to deliver me from all hardness of heart, and implant in me a living principle of faith, that I might be brought savingly to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

"Thus, Rev. Fathers,
I close, and remain your
unworthy child,
"GARDNER THURSTON."

Soon after he wrote to these ministers who were over him in the Lord, he obtained peace in believing, and joy in the Holy Ghost : but did not make a public profession of his faith in God, till April 4th, 1741. When this day came, his mind was covered with darkness, and filled with distressing thoughts that he had rested short of the Rock of ages

as the foundation of his hope ; and that he should inevitably be an hypocrite if he joined the church.—In this trying period of his life, he endeavored to make God his refuge ; and prayed for the light of his countenance that he might be led understandingly, to know and to do his will. The time arrived, in which he was to be examined as a candidate for baptism. But his fears concerning himself still continued, and multiplied to such an host against him, that when he came to the meeting house door, he dared not enter, but turned and walked into a small burying ground, and sat down upon a rock.—This place, by the kind hand of God upon him, was made, like the resting place which Jacob found, as he journeyed from Beersheba to Padanaram. About sixty years afterward, walking in the same burying ground, Mr. Thurston stopped, putting his staff upon the rock, said, “ There I sat down, overwhelmed with distress, while the church were waiting for me to come in, to give them an account of the dealings of God with my soul. Soon after I sat down, I was enabled through rich grace to give up myself, and all I had, into the hands of my blessed Jesus, who immediately dissipated the darkness which covered me,—removed my distress,—filled me with peace and consolation, and gave me strength to declare what he had done for my soul.”

He was received by the church, and baptized by their pastor, the Rev. Nicholas Eyers, and enjoyed great peace of mind, and establishment in the doctrine of Christ.

He was highly esteemed in the church as a pious and promising youth, and took an active part in their conference meetings, till God was pleased to call him to declare more publicly the glad tidings of salvation.

He had many solemn and deep impressions upon his mind, that God had called him to preach, which he could not relinquish ; believing that this opinion was agreeable to the scriptures, and corresponded with the experience of all the true ministers of Jesus.

He frequently observed in the time of my acquaintance with him, that he could not assist in the ordination of any, unless they had been born again, were clear in doctrine, and had a deep and satisfactory sense of being called of God, to preach his everlasting gospel, and that it was their indispensable duty to obey God, and give themselves to the work of the ministry, that their profiting appear to all, and they be workmen needing not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Though he did not believe that they were called in this age of the world by miraculous evidence as the apostles were ; yet that they were designed by the Almighty for the work of the ministry, and therefore a foundation was laid in their temper and talents for this important work, which would be manifested to others when the Lord's time was come to put them into his vineyard, as workers with and for him.

The gifts of nature, he considered, with many who have written well upon the subject, to be “ a sound judgment, a clear understanding, a retentive me-

mory and an aptness to teach." Should any enter the ministry evidently deficient in these, we may not expect much instruction from them, although they may have experienced a change of heart, and travelled through all the customary courses of a classical and a liberal education.

Also he held it as a great absurdity in any, to take encouragement from the promises made to the apostles, when they have no satisfactory evidence of being moved by the same spirit, to preach and administer ordinances. For no man taketh this honor to himself, but he that is called of God.

The church were well satisfied, after hearing his experience of the operations of the spirit upon his mind, concerning the work of the ministry, and listening with pleasing attention a number of times to hear him declare the great truths of the Christian system. They licensed him to preach in 1748, and requested him to be an assistant to their pastor, the Rev. Nicholas Evers.

Mr. Thurston had to preach generally once on Lord's day, and one lecture every week. His taste for information especially in divinity was considerable, and he had an opportunity above many, to gratify this taste: for the Rev. Nicholas Evers, with whom he was so intimately connected, was a man of good talents and learning. The church were so well satisfied with Mr. Thurston, that they were unwilling he should leave them; and on April 29, 1759, he was ordained their pastor, for Mr. Evers departed this life on the 15th Feb, 1759, suddenly, having

preached part of the Lord's day before. As Mr. Thurston was born, educated, experienced the efficacy of rich grace, joined this church, was licensed by them, preached among them, and by their united voice, ordained their pastor; he was not ignorant of their expectations from him as their minister in Christ.

He therefore determined to give himself wholly to the all important work of preaching the glorious gospel of Christ, and to finish his course with joy. Consequently he left his former business, which was lucrative, closed his accounts, and entered into the vineyard of the Lord with all his heart; pleading the sweet promise which flowed from the Saviour's lips; "Lo, I am with you always even to the end of the world."

Mr. T. was endowed with an excellent disposition, and possessed a good natural constitution, with a quick and brilliant imagination. He was mild, religious, studious and amiable in his family; lively and engaging in all the social circles of real friendship; tender, melting, solemn and devotional among the sons and daughters of affliction; easy and graceful in all his public movements. His voice was strong and melodious, and his heart all alive in the great and arduous work of the ministry of reconciliation.

He generally wrote the heads of his sermons, the quotations from scripture, and some of the most interesting ideas which he thought necessary for the clear illustration of his subject.— These, he commonly committed to memory, and but seldom had

his notes before his eyes in public.

As he firmly believed, that God must pour down his spirit upon the people, or no success would follow the preaching of his word, he earnestly implored the divine aid and came into the pulpit as a live coal from the altar of his God.

When writing to a young minister, whom he loved in the Lord, he said, "I hope this will find you in a good state of health, enjoying your master's presence. I have no doubt you experience more and more of the importance of the work you are engaged in, and often think of these words; Who is sufficient for these things? Christ will support and supply his ministers. Let him, therefore, be the main subject of your sermons, and invite sinners to come to him for strength, and to his merits for acceptance. My heart rejoices to hear the success which has attended your ministry already: let it humble you and make you watchful, and while you are planting or watering, remember, that all the increase must come from God. Apply yourself close to the study of the scriptures, the best of books, and see that you advance nothing for doctrine, but what you can bring with a "thus saith the Lord" for its confirmation. And now, I commend you unto God and the word of his grace, praying him to furnish you with every ministerial gift and grace, and abundantly own your labors."

Mr. Thurston's whole soul appeared to be formed for society, and to be deeply engaged in preaching, powerfully, the plain

principles of the doctrine of Christ. Being possessed of pleasing pulpit talents, giving himself wholly to the work of the ministry, and being much engaged for the salvation of men and the glory of God, his hearers became so numerous that his meeting-house was enlarged twice, till it was 75 by 50 feet, and was well filled as long as he was able to preach. He was favored with repeated revivals of religion among his people. Though these revivals were small in comparison with what many experience in the ministry in the present day, yet his success was not measured by the duration of his ministry; for many who professed religion about the time, and after his death, dated their awakenings, and some the beginning of their hope in the Saviour's merits under his preaching.— And some within a few months, who have joined the church, declare, that the commencement of their concern began when he was their minister.

A number of ministers own him as an instrument in the Lord's hands of their awakening, comfort and establishment in the faith of God's elect.*

* The Rev. William Rogers, D. D. was Mr. Thurston's nephew. He graduated at Brown University, September 9th, 1769, was baptized September, 1770; licensed to preach August, 1771; removed to Philadelphia in December, 1771; ordained May 31st, 1772; was a chaplain in the revolutionary army under the immortal Washington, from March, 1776, till June, 1781; appointed Professor of English and Oratory in the College and Academy of Philadelphia in March, 1789. He received a doctorate in July, 1790; was elect-

Many of his excellent letters within my hands can only be glanced at, in such a performance as this; and only a few sentences which he uttered concerning his happy exit, from time into the unspeakable enjoyment of his Lord in eternity.

Newport, 24th March, 1792.

“DEAR MADAM,

“I have heard that you have not enjoyed so good health of late as usual, on account of the loss of one of your eyes; and that you desire me to write you on this subject.

“Could any thing drop from my pen that might be beneficial and comfortable, it would yield me the most peculiar pleasure. We are informed by scripture, that affliction cometh not out of the ground, neither doth trouble spring out of the dust. It is not by chance, but by the will and counsel of God, and is designed for our benefit. Heb. xii. 5—18. You have heard and read much of Job,—his severe trials and afflictions, and his patience, and the gracious end the Lord had in view. All turned out at last to his great advantage. He learned more of God and his divine perfections, than ever he knew before; so that he abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes. I hope, my dear friend, that your present affliction will be so sanctified, that it may have the same blessed effects.

“Afflictions are God’s school. There we may learn the vanity of this world, and its utter in-

ed Professor of English and Belles-Letters in the University of Pennsylvania, in April, 1792, which place he still holds.

sufficiency to make us happy. It is all in vain to expect happiness from any quarter, but in the love and favor of God, and being re-united to him through our Lord Jesus Christ.

“The loss of the sight of one eye is very great, and it is a mercy you have one left. These bodily eyes must soon fail—be closed, and we be in the land of darkness, where we shall not need them. Job x. 21, 22.

“But, dear madam, there is another eye which the Lord will give to all who love him supremely; which is vastly preferable to us, even in this world; I mean the eye of faith. By this, Abraham saw Christ’s day and was glad: by this, Job saw his Redeemer, and Moses saw him who was invisible. By this, we now behold the once suffering, bleeding Lamb of God, who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. Yes, by this eye, we can look within the vail and see Christ, seated at the right hand of God, and ever living to make intercession for all who come unto God by him. By this eye, we can look through the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, and view the spirits of the just made perfect; joined with the blessed angels in celebrating the praises of their God and King.

“O transporting sight! Methinks, madam, you are now ready to cry, Lord, evermore give me this sight! He will give it to every one who comes unto him and asks for it. Yes, dear friend, I have something more to say, that we shall see the dear Lord with these bodily eyes; though useless in the grave, he will change these vile bodies, with

all their members, and fashion them like his own glorious body. Then hope will cease in fruition, and faith in vision. Then those eyes which have been so long closed and useless, shall be opened again, and made useful. With mine eyes shall I behold him, and not another for me. Then shall we see the Saviour, and converse with him, as one friend converseth with another. We shall see him and be entirely conformed to his image, and be ever with the Lord. Think, dear friend, what a glorious sight this will be, which can never wax old, or dim. The inhabitants of the New Jerusalem shall no more say they are sick. There will be no more pain; sorrow and sighing shall entirely flee away.

"The dear Lord grant you, and every branch of your family this portion.

"I remain your sincere friend,
"GARDNER THURSTON."

To a young Minister under some trials.

"I rejoice in the grace of God bestowed on you, and the success granted you. I pray God, to give you the wisdom of the serpent, and the harmlessness of the dove. A good cause, a good conscience, a steady and uniform conduct, will put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. I cannot give you better advice than Paul gave to Timothy. Read again and again his second Epistle, second chapter. I sympathize with you in your trials; but be assured that God will be with you in six and in seven troubles. I know that your mind must be differently

exercised, and Satan will not be wanting on his part, to take every advantage to hurt your usefulness, and there are some who will unite with him, and watch for your halting.

"I believe that God, who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, will support and defend you. Be upon your guard to cut off occasion from those who seek occasion to speak disrespectfully of you. Endeavor always to exhibit a gospel temper. If they curse, do you bless; for the servant of the Lord must not strive, but in meekness instruct those who oppose themselves. You must not think your afflictions strange. They are what your Master and many of his servants met with before. You are only filling up your measure of that which was behind, of the affliction of Christ in your flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church. O blessed privilege, to partake with Christ in his afflictions. Be not discouraged, for the power of the enemy is limited like the great deep; hitherto it may come and no further. For the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder shall he restrain. Concerning polemic performances, I will just observe, that I have formerly read many, and after all I find the bible to be the best book to discover what truth is, and to establish us in the truth. In this book we find a glorious display of God's justice in the righteous condemnation of the wicked, and a glorious display of his divine grace in the salvation of his people, even from the foundation to the top stone, it is all grace, grace, free grace."

Again he writes, "My dearly

beloved son in the faith, you and I must not only preach a crucified Jesus, but live to his glory. In the morning sow thy seed, &c. and God will bless and grant success when and where he pleases. He will reward his ministers not according to their success, but according to their faithfulness.

I think every means in our power ought to be made use of, for the spread of the gospel. How affecting it is, that such a large part of the inhabitants of this globe are now in gross darkness! It appears to me, by the present events of Providence, that some great good is about to be disclosed to the world. O, that God would be pleased to open the fountain of his goodness and cause the divine influence of his Spirit to spread far and wide, till the whole earth be filled with his glory and all nations see his salvation."

Mr. Thurston was well acquainted with afflictions, for he lived to see all his near relations except his daughter, buried. On these occasions he gave vent to his pious soul by writing to his friends the genuine exercises of his heart.

To one of his correspondents he observes, * "I embrace the present opportunity to inform you, that I enjoy a better state of health than I have for some years past. I have abundant reason to bless God who has been the guide of my youth and through life, for that support afforded me in the late trying dispensation

which I have passed through. He has indeed been a present help in time of trouble. How unsuitable would it be for us to have all our evils and trying changes in view at once!"

Therefore let us admire the words of Jesus: "Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof."

He warns us against being filled with anxiety about tomorrow.

O, may I ever lean on my helper God. I am indeed passing through the very furnace of affliction and drinking the bitter cup of the same: but it is the cup which my heavenly Father gives me, and it is mixed with mercy. It is all right; for I am sure that infinite wisdom cannot err, and that infinite goodness orders all things for the best to them who love him. O, why should such an unprofitable servant as I am be spared? What are the designs of Providence? Surely the Lord has something further for me to do in his house, else I should have been cut down. I am firm in the opinion that God will not take away his ministers before their work is done. If there be one more sinner to be converted by his ministry, one more saint to be comforted, they will be continued. I hope I shall be willing to wait all the days of my appointed time, till my change come; then through rich grace, be like a shock of corn fully ripe coming in, in its season. And why should a minister or a Christian wish to stay one moment longer out of heaven than he can be useful?"

It was Mr. Thurston's meat and drink to be useful in Zion, and he was so till his departure; although he was not able to preach

* A little after he had buried his affectionate, pious and much esteemed wife, who departed this life Dec. 17, 1784.

for about three years before his death ; yet he was able to attend meeting for the most part of that time, and to visit his flock, and to speak comfortably unto God's people. He appeared to be all the time on the wing for heaven ; in fine we can say with propriety, that his conversation was in heaven. I had the pleasure of accompanying a number of ministers and Christian friends to his house, in the course of about eighteen months before he left us, and they all said, when we returned from an interview with him, that they never saw any one, so unconditionally given up to live upon the promises of God as he was, and who would talk so familiarly and constantly about death, being with Jesus, knowing the saints in heaven, and the unutterable felicity which would overwhelm the whole ransomed family of God in the resurrection morning.

With all this glow of love to God and men, he appeared even in his deportment, and regular in conversation. He observed, "that the more we advance in the divine life, the more regular our frames will be." "My dear Lord," said he, "has not forsaken me in my advanced age. I feel determined as much as ever to go on in the strength of the Lord, and to make mention of his righteousness, and of his only. For it pleased him to convince me, in my very early days, of the depravity of my nature, and the wretchedness of my heart ; and to call me by his free and sovereign grace, into the way of life and salvation, alone thro' the merits and righteousness of his dear Son. But I have rea-

son to regret, that I have made so little progress in the Christian life. By the grace of God I am what I am. The enjoyment of the divine presence is better than life.

The Psalmist prayed that God would not leave him, when he was old and grey-headed ; and God says, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. O, how excellent also is that all comprehensive promise, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Satan will try his utmost to shake the foundation of the Christian's hope, to despair of his relation to God as a Father in Christ ; nay, to raise if possible the foundation of all religion : And need we wonder, that he should thus tempt us, when we learn that he tempted our dear Redeemer ! But we can tell him that he is conquered and vanquished, and that Christ's victory is ours. Isa. xl. 1, 2. John xvi. 33.

Christ's death, resurrection and intercession all combine to render the believer's hope both sure and stedfast. But O, this wretched heart of unbelief, this destroys the Christian's comfort. Lord, increase our faith ; Lord, help our unbelief. He adds, "My dear friend, when you get near to God, let me request the remembrance of one, who is the least of all saints."

Mr. Thurston was remarkably fond of meditating, and conversing upon the triumphs of the Christian over death, and the grave ; and the perfection of our nature, and the extensiveness of our knowledge, when we come to dwell with Christ in heaven. "O," said he, "when I come into the glorious presence of my Lord, I shall see and

D d d

know those servants, and children of my heavenly Father, with whom I took sweet counsel while on earth. Yes, I shall know them as quick and with as much certainty as Peter knew Moses and Elias, when they descended from heaven to Mount Taber to converse with Christ. I am not afraid to die, for my Lord Jesus will be with me, and I shall fear no evil. I know in whom I have believed, and am sure that he will keep that, which I have committed unto him. What is that? It is my all, for I have been enabled to give myself into his hands. Therefore I am not troubled about his property, for he knows how to keep it." One morning I called upon him, just after he had recovered from a fainting, and with a smile upon his countenance, he said, "I did not think of seeing your face again in the flesh one hour past; for I expected to have been with Jesus in heaven before this moment. Yet I do not wish you to think that my Lord will tarry too long. His understanding is infinite. He is unchangeable. I have lived to a good old age and have seen the salvation of the Lord. I long to see my Saviour in glory. He will come quickly. For me to die is gain. The death of the righteous is called only a sleep. Them who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. And the dead in Christ shall rise first. We shall then be like him, for we shall see him as he is. He will change our vile bodies, and make them like unto his most glorious body. Then shall I be satisfied, &c.

A little after this blessed inter-

view, he was more unwell, and became debilitated in his speech, and for a few days before his death, could not communicate intelligibly, the transporting views he had of another world. But his serene and smiling countenance and gestures, were powerfully combined to shew unto us, that the arms of infinite strength were underneath, and the light of God's countenance beaming upon his soul. Mr. R. Rogers, his Nephew, and myself were sitting by him, when he fell asleep in Jesus upon the 23d of August 1802, without uttering one groan to pierce our hearts.

"Now smiling angels round him
wait,
And waft his spirit to that state,
Where nothing shall his peace
annoy,
Where dwells unutterable joy;
Where trees of life for ever grow,
And springs of living waters flow.
O! may he hear, from Christ the
Son,
The happy plaudit of well done,
In bliss supreme O, may he shine,
With a refulgence all divine."

He left only one daughter to mourn the departure of one of the best, most dear, tender, pious and affectionate fathers, that has lived on earth.

This amiable daughter paid every attention to her father which was possible for a child to do in this vale of tears; and I may safely say that he was worthy of such universal attention. It was his earnest prayer that she might experience the efficacy of rich grace, and we have the happiness to believe she has; for since his death our dear Lord has given her a good hope, through grace, and she has joined the church.

Upon the 25th of August the ministers of every denomination in the town, and some from the adjacent towns, and a large multitude attended his funeral, when the Rev. Stephen Gano, of Providence, delivered a suitable discourse from Rev. ii. 10.

Here the dear flock of God saw their under shepherd clothed in death, and laid among the dead. Multitudes wept over his dust. He went down to the grave beloved by all denominations who knew him ; for his character was unblemished and truly dear to the hearts of the pious.

Thus, dear sir, I put into your hands the small sketch of the life of your uncle, and leave it with you to make that use of it, which you may think best for the interest of religion and subscribe myself,

Yours, affectionately,

JOSHUA BRADLEY.

Mansfield, (Conn.) Oct. 1808.

Mr. Joseph Rogers.



TO THE EDITOR OF THE CONNECTICUT MAGAZINE.

REV. SIR,

THE following letter, addressed by a Clergyman to one of his parishioners, is submitted to your disposal. You will publish it or not, as you shall think best.

Yours, &c.

DEAR SIR,

AS you have ever treated me in a friendly manner, I cannot but be deeply interested in your welfare, and feel a sincere wish to promote your happiness.

The friendship which I entertain for you is real ; it is a friendship for your eternal as well as temporal concerns ; it is an ardent desire that you may be happy in eternity as well as in time. As an expression of this friendship, I have, after much deliberation, determined to address a letter to you on a subject which most men think important, I mean the subject of religion. Whatever your opinion may be of the sentiments which my letter shall contain, I feel a confidence that you will do justice to my motives in writing,—that you will believe I am influenced by no sinister views,—that I am, as I profess to be, governed by a real regard for you. Let me request you to peruse what I write with candor and with attention ; condemn not my sentiments without examining them ; and let them have that influence upon you which, upon mature reflection, you shall think they merit.

We have often conversed together upon religious topics ; and I have heard you advance sentiments which, if my ideas are right, evince you to be in a very dangerous situation ; whereas if you are right and I am wrong, I am as safe, both as regards my present and future well being, as you are. There is this very great difference in our respective systems, that upon your plan we are both safe, but upon mine you are not only in an error, but an error which endangers your eternal happiness. You will not wonder then that, if I am sincere in believing as I profess and as I preach, I should feel concerned for you, as I have heard you advance sentiments diametrically oppo-

site to mine on some important points.

In forming your ideas of what Christianity really is, let me ask you first of all, not to judge of it simply from the conduct of its professors, or even of its ministers. That there are in the Christian world many hypocrites, cannot be denied; and that some Christian ministers do not believe what they preach, may also be true. But, my dear Sir, does it follow from this that Christianity is not a good system; that it is not of divine original; or that there are no sincere professors or preachers of that system? Let not then the misconduct of any who call themselves Christians lead you to discard the system, without a full and candid examination of what Christianity is, as taught by Christ and his Apostles. And let me ask you to look for yourself in this respect. Many men, young men especially, embrace loose, infidel principles, because such are the principles of men who have distinguished themselves in the republic of letters. But let me ask you, have there not been men on the side of Christianity equal in strength of natural genius, and in acquired learning to any who have been on the opposite side? I will not mention any Ecclesiastics, because they may be considered as interested in the question. Were not Lord Bacon, Sir Robert Boyle, Sir Isaac Newton, and many other eminent civilians, equal to any of the champions of infidelity in strength of judgment, in deep, penetrating research, in force of mind? The number and abilities of infidels,

therefore, furnish no argument in their favor.

But you will say, Why these remarks upon infidelity? You will tell me you are not an infidel; that you are a believer in Christianity, according as you understand it. I reply, there is a loose, vague, indistinct belief of the Christian religion very little, if any better than open, avowed infidelity. And here, my friend, I candidly confess, I fear lies the difficulty with you. Let me turn your attention to a few fundamental points.

That man dies, after spending a few years in this world, is a certain truth; and, so far as our senses are any guide to us, he is no better than brutes in this respect. We see him die and waste away like them. Now, is that the end of man? Does he cease to exist at death? That you have often thought upon the subject I fully believe; and as I never heard you express a doubt on that point, I shall take it for granted that you believe in a future state of existence. Let me ask you what proof you have of this? Will you tell me, reason teaches it to you? I believe, Sir, you will find it difficult to prove it from reason only. Many things approve themselves to our reason when discovered, which reason alone could not at first discover. It is well known that the ancient Greek and Roman philosophers expressed doubts on this subject. They were not at least fully satisfied. And are there not many modern philosophers, who openly assert that death is an eternal sleep? True, it has been the popular belief of all nations, that the soul is immortal. But I appre-

hend this came originally from a revelation made to man ; because I cannot rationally account for the idea upon any other supposition ; and I confess that did I not believe in the scriptures as a divine revelation, I should have no evidence which would satisfy my mind, that I was to exist after death. Is it not the case with you, that your belief of a future state arises either from tradition, or from what you see in the scriptures ? If from the former simply, you surely, as a reflecting, judicious man, cannot be satisfied with it. If from the latter, that is, from the scriptures, it must be because you believe them written by divine revelation. But, my friend, if the immortality of man is to be believed because it is taught in the bible, are not other doctrines contained in that book to be believed also ? Is it consistent with reason,—is it consistent with the wisdom and goodness of God, to suppose that a book, purporting to be a revelation from him, should be partly inspired and partly not. If inspired, it can contain nothing but truth. The consequence appears to me unavoidable. If one doctrine is to be received as true, because revealed in the scriptures, every other doctrine contained there, ought also to be received. We here get beyond the province of reason. Having by reason, established the divine inspiration of the scriptures, it will not do to bring any religious sentiment to the test of reason alone. If it appears to be clearly taught in the scriptures, it is to be believed, if the scriptures are acknowledged as true. Consistency requires this. Wholly

reject the bible as a divine revelation, or wholly receive it.

What is to be the situation of man after death ? Happy, you say. What proof have you of this ? Will you tell me that your reason teaches you so ? Look a little at the idea, and see if it is not your wishes rather than your reason. I have before intimated, that it is at least doubtful, whether unassisted reason can prove a future existence.—But, admitting that it can, it cannot inform us with certainty, any thing concerning the condition of man in that state ; at most it cannot insure to us happiness. It is a just philosophical maxim, that the same causes will always produce the same effects. What occasions most of the misery in this life ? Is it not the improper, sinful conduct of men ? What evidence have you from reason, that men will be better in a future state ? And if not better, can they be happier ? Do men as they grow older in life, always grow better ? They lay aside some of their youthful vices it is true ; but is their temper, is the state of their minds better ? And does not happiness depend on the state of the heart ? Perhaps you will say, the benevolence of God will lead him to make man happy. But why does not the same benevolence induce God to make all men happy here ? Surely his power and wisdom will not be greater hereafter than they are now. Upon the principles of reason alone, therefore, we cannot prove that any will be happier in another life than they are in this. Besides, a belief in the existence and perfections of God, necessarily involves a be-

lief of man's accountability.— And if man is accountable, what evidence does reason afford that God will pardon his sins at all? True, we might hope it, but we cannot be certain of it. Justice is an attribute of a perfect being as well as goodness. From what source, then, will you draw arguments, which are conclusive, that God will pardon your sins, and make you more happy in eternity than you now are? Are you sure that repentance alone will propitiate his favor? And if it will, are you sure that if you die without repenting, you shall then repent? I hesitate not to assert, that human reason cannot give a satisfactory answer to these questions. Men, while engaged in the busy scenes of life, and therefore thinking little of them, may suppose they are clear enough; but it becomes a wise man to reflect, and consider on what he is risking his eternal happiness; it certainly becomes him not to erect hopes of happiness, till he sees whether he has a foundation that will support them.

But you will say, perhaps, it is from the bible you adopt the idea of being happy in eternity. Here, again, let me ask you to be consistent. If it is from that book only, that you can derive any satisfactory evidence of a future state, or of the nature of that state; then why not look there only for information on the subject,—why not believe the whole system there contained? It is an absurd supposition,—one which a man of your good sense ought not to admit, that one part of the system of Christianity comes from God, and that there is no truth in the other

part. I admit that the bible clearly holds forth the idea of a future state of immortal glory and blessedness; but I hesitate not to say, that it also clearly reveals that glory and blessedness will not be the portion of those who die in their sins, because, in the first place, justice requires that they should be punished; and, secondly, they are not fitted for the enjoyment of such a state; sin in its very nature leading to misery. It is not, my dear Sir, from the bible, that the doctrine of universal salvation is derived. Men may criticise upon the meaning of certain Greek and Hebrew words; they may select particular passages, and separating them from their connection, gather from them an idea which suits their preconceived notions, and their depraved wishes, and in this way build up a scheme, which to them, appears right. But is this a reasonable,—is it a fair mode of proceeding with the scriptures? Take and view them as a whole, and you will find them representing the human race as consisting of two general classes, different in their views and conduct, and to be differently disposed of after death. Now, have you closely examined the bible, with that serious attention which a question of such importance demands, and thence derived the belief that all mankind are to be saved? Or have you not rather embraced the idea from that desire of happiness which is natural to man, and from some indistinct ideas of the benevolence of God, without inquiring into the real character of God; into the real nature of sin and holiness, and in-

to the scripture idea of heavenly happiness? A man of your good natural sense, and of your inquisitive mind, ought not to satisfy himself with superficial enquiries into such deeply interesting points.

My friend, does not this subject merit your serious attention? The bubble of life will soon break. And when death comes, it will be too late to correct errors. Is it not wise to be on the safe side? You find a part of mankind, and some of them at least not inferior in point of intellectual endowments, believing from the bible, that a part only of the human race is to be saved. You find others professing to believe that all will be saved. Now, if the last are correct in their sentiments, the others will in the final issue fare as well as they; and if they are sometimes troubled in this life, by their fears concerning futurity, it is a matter of little consequence, as this life is so short compared with eternity. But if the former are right, what will become of those who, thinking all mankind will finally be happy, give themselves no anxiety respecting a future state, and restrain themselves from vice only from motives of present interest and convenience? Let me intreat you seriously to represent to yourself the situation of a man of the world, departing from life, under a persuasion that he is going into a state of happiness, because he believes all mankind will be saved, and then finding himself in that state of misery, which some believe will be the portion of impenitent sinners? How different his situation from that of

a man, dying with fear and trembling from an apprehension of appearing before a holy God, and then finding his fears wrong, and that all mankind are to be happy after death? How different also his situation from the Christian, who dies in the exercise of a lively faith and a triumphant hope of immortal blessedness, and after death finds his condition much happier than he had even imagined while in life? Does not the bare possibility that the doctrine of universal salvation may be false, require that it should not be embraced without a careful examination?

And now, my friend, let me repeat my request that you would look into these things. I have thought from expressions which I have heard you drop, within a few months, that you was gradually plunging deeper and deeper into what I considered as very dangerous errors. And I cannot view a friend in such a situation without feeling the deepest anxiety for him.—Were you to see me in some eminent danger, would not your friendship lead you to endeavor to relieve me? And can I hear you advance sentiments, which appear to me to endanger the salvation of your immortal soul, and do nothing to save you from that ruin which I fear is coming upon you? If I can, I deserve not to be called your friend. I wish you every temporal blessing; I wish you every reasonable worldly felicity; but I feel much more anxious for your soul, and for your eternal well being. Say not that it is my business to be a preacher; and that it is well for me to write in this strain. It is not in the

character of a preacher that I place myself, in addressing this letter to you; it is in the character of a friend pleading with another friend to pay attention to his own good. As I firmly believe in the Christian system, and believe it in the sense in which I preach it, you cannot wonder at my anxiety on your behalf. Think me not assuming; pardon my engagedness; and believe me to be, with the most ardent wishes for your temporal and eternal felicity,

Your sincere friend,
as well as affectionate

PASTOR.

Explanation of Scriptural Types.

NO. XVI.

(Continued from p. 342.)

JOSHUA a type of Christ.

IN Moses, delivering the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage, as the lawgiver, and guide of the peculiar people through the wilderness to Canaan, we have a typical representation of Christ emancipating his church from the dominion of Satan, the misery of sin, and conducting his chosen people through the dispensation of the law—and saints through the toilsome pilgrimage of this world, to their heavenly and eternal rest. When Moses had accomplished the ministry of his office, he was succeeded by Joshua, invested with a different office, to perform important services for the people of God; and in Joshua we have Christ assuming

another character, and performing the most essential services for his church. In Moses, the Israelites had a deliverer, a lawgiver and a guide; but in Joshua, a general and a conqueror.—When the Amalekites attacked them in the wilderness, Joshua led them to battle and to victory. Having conducted them through Jordan, he commenced his military career, by assailing the strongly fortified city of Jericho, with the blowing of the rams-horns-trumpets by the priests; at the continued sound of which, the walls fell flat to the ground, and the chosen tribes instantly took possession. He led the valiant men of Israel against the kings of Canaan, making a common cause and combined for their destruction. He made war a long time with the kings of the Amorites, and the inhabitants of the land, until he had conquered, subdued and expelled them from their coasts. The Canaanites being subdued, he divided their land to the chosen tribes, and each possessed the lot of his inheritance. By him they were introduced and settled, in order and peace, in earthly prosperity and glory, in the land which the Lord God had promised to their fathers. In Joshua and his conquests, and in the earthly prosperity and felicity of the Israelites, the chosen people of God, in the land of Canaan, have we not the following evangelical subjects impressively represented?

1. In his war with the Amalekites, and the other enemies of the Israelites in the wilderness, have we not exhibited Christ, the Captain of salvation for his people combatting the enemies of

of his church, and conducting it through all its conflicts under the dispensation of Moses, until it made the transition from that economy to its evangelical state?

2. In Joshua, as the captain of Israel, assaulting the walls of Jericho, with the blowing of trumpets, made of the horns of rams by the priests, have we not typically exhibited, in glowing colors, Christ as a man of war, and the captain of the host of the Lord; the church, assailing the strongly fortified and garrisoned port of Satan's dominion in his old heathen empire by the gospel trumpet, sounded by his apostles and ministers,—and in the falling of the walls of Jericho by the continued sound of ram's horns trumpets, of all martial implements the most simple and inefficient, do we not see the barriers of Satan's kingdom prostrated by the preaching of the gospel, of the very humble and despised doctrine of the cross? "The weapons, of our warfare," said the apostle, "are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds."

3. In the victory of Joshua and the Israelites over the combined kings, and their extended conquests of the various nations of Canaan until they were subdued, and the land had rest from war, may we not see the continued and extended conquests of Christ and his church, of the combined powers of darkness, and the various parts of Satan's visible empire in the world, until they shall be all vanquished and subdued; as in the possession, order and happy state of the chosen tribes in the promised lands, we may see the order,

prosperity, peace and happiness of the church in its millennial condition on earth, and ultimately its glorified state in heaven.

4. As in Joshua, conducting the Israelites to conflicts and victory over the kings of Canaan, and in their peaceful and happy state in the promised inheritance, we have a type of Christ, as the head and leader of his church, conducting it through all its conflicts with its visible enemies, and introducing it to its millennial prosperity and eternal felicity: so we have in him a representation of Christ, as the spiritual guide and leader of his people, in all their spiritual conflicts with their internal, spiritual enemies, and through his skill and agency, out of weakness are they made strong, wax valiant in the spiritual warfare, and put to flight the numerous hosts of their spiritual adversaries; yea, are more than conquerors through him who has loved them, and died for them, and receive the honor and reward of victory, an eternal crown of glory.—And when Christ shall have conducted his people to the mansions prepared for them in his Father's house and kingdom, may he not make the appeal to them which Joshua made to Israel, You know in all your hearts, and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing thereof hath failed.

When Joshua had conquered Canaan, and put the Israelites in possession of it, he fell on sleep and was laid unto his fathers.—And when Christ shall have subdued all things to himself, and

put down all rule and all authority and all power, he will then deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, and God shall be all in all. Amen. Even so, Lord Jesus.

[To be continued.]



Letter from a Father to a Son in affliction.

MY DEAR SON,

INSTANTLY on hearing of your deep and complicated affliction, I attempted to suggest to you reasons for such submission as alone can support the mind under the chastisements of a holy Providence. In

our reply, you say, "I once thought I had faith in God, now I find I had not. How shall I come to him, and how shall I stay myself upon him?" The very words of your question point to a divine direction, which I will endeavor to explain.

"Without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Certainly the question, How shall we come to God so as to please and be accepted by him, is important, and it is one, which first or last, we shall all make with serious importunity. So long as worldly prosperity shines around us; so long as we can find amusement and employment in worldly things, as you have done; and death, with the thoughts of it, are placed out of view, it is possible the question may take little hold of our minds. But when deep adversity, which, by our own power

we can neither escape nor resist, falls on us, or when death approaches, the inquiry will appear all-important, and equally so to every man who justly realizes the situation of a creature. In such cases, it will be desirable to come to God as an almighty helper, and a Saviour who hath mercy for the miserable and helpless.

We must come to him, believing that he is, with a firm conviction of his existence, and some just apprehensions of his character. Although there be sufficient evidence, and a general confession of the Being of a God, there is great reason to believe men are not so much agreed in their opinions of his nature and character, as they be in the acknowledgment that some Being exists under this glorious name. We are prone to think the Lord such an one as ourselves.—The prejudices arising from an evil heart, are a cause additional to the weakness of human reason, of forming very false as well as inadequate conceptions of the being and character of God. Those inadequate conceptions of God, which arise solely from a weakness of the understanding, we may hope will not be charged on us as sin; but such as are false, through an evil heart of unbelief, and from a disposition to think the Lord such an one as ourselves, are as criminal as the heart from which they flow.—It is these for which men are guilty, and which they should endeavor to remove by all the means of information with which we are graciously favored. If man was a creature of perfect rectitude, he might depend much on the opinions of

his own reason ; but there is evidence he is depraved, and the depravity of the heart instantly throws a prejudice over his understanding and powers of judgment.

Hence comes that diversity of apprehension concerning the nature and character of God, which we have reason to believe takes place under the general confession that he exists. Every vicious appetite draws the judgment from an impartial opinion. Every sinful inclination and habit of practice becomes a cause of prejudice concerning what God is ; concerning his will which is our law ; concerning the principles of his government, the view he hath of our character, and the manner he will deal with us in his infinite righteousness. These are causes for darkening the understanding, so powerful, that we can scarce conceive of any thing that hath not been ascribed to the Creator of all things by one or another of his sinful creatures. Hence comes the necessity of that revelation concerning himself which we have graciously received. This revelation is as necessary to teach us what God is, as to inform us in the methods of his grace, through a reconciling mediator. In coming to God, we must not only believe that he exists, but have some just apprehensions what he is ; we must search his word for a knowledge of his character and perfections, and the general principles on which he will deal with his creatures. Believing that God is, is believing him such a glorious Being as he really exists. Going to an imaginary character, formed by our own

fancy according to the dictates and the desires of a corrupted heart, is not going to God. In coming to him so that he will be pleased and accept us, we must conceive him to be such as he hath described himself in his own most perfect word.

It is not enough that we conceive he is a Being very far above us, unless our ideas correspond to his own description. It is not enough that we bring our reason to exercise, and come to him as this, under the influence of a depraved heart, thinks he possibly may be ; but we must come to him as his name is given, and as his perfections and counsels are described in the unerring oracles of truth.— And what do these say concerning him ? They teach us to come to him as a God of infinite holiness. They tell us he charges his angels with folly, and the heavens are not clean in his sight. That he is displeased with all iniquity, and though he may be reconciled to the repenting sinner, who, by divine grace and his own endeavors, may be cleansed from sin, he never can be reconciled either to the nature, principles or practice of sin. They tell us that our hands must be clean, and our hearts pure, humble and obedient to all his will, when we approach to ask his blessing. They tell us that while his justice is, and for ever will be glorious in all his appointments to transgressors, both in his present providence and future judgment ; his goodness will also be glorious in pardoning and accepting unto eternal life, such as believe and live according to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is doubtless true that some, and how many we can not say, who think they come to God, are mistaken through the very unworthy and false apprehensions they have of his nature and will. Into these false notions they are drawn by the sinfulness of their own hearts. It is not the God of Israel, it is not the God of the Christian Church, it is not the God who now is and ever will be adored by angels and the spirits of just men made perfect in heaven to whom they come; for he is a God of perfect rectitude, of spotless purity, of infinite justice as well as forbearance towards those who have sinned.

He is the friend of moral order, in society, and of pure virtue in the affections of the heart, and in the practices of social life. But the God to whom they come is a fictitious character, formed according to the deceitful imaginations of an evil heart. Through complaisance to themselves, in their own imaginations, they have robbed infinite Deity, of his unchangeable, eternal rectitude, his love of holiness and his hatred of sin, of that justice which guards his government and his glory, and they have debased his goodness to something like their own selfish affection. Believing the Lord to be like themselves, they can come to him, and delight that he is, imagining him to be such that they can explain both the law and the gospel in a manner that is accommodated to their own case; although they are destitute of Christian charity, faith and good works. The way to undeceive minds in this state, is to set before them the

Holy One of Israel, as he is found in the descriptions of his word, and as his character may be inferred from the duties which we are commanded to perform; and they will find that they never came to him, or in other words, that they never did believe he is or exists, as he is described in his holy word.

To please the Lord, we must come to him in the manner appointed by his infinite wisdom. Surely the Lord may appoint the manner in which it is fit sinners should approach him. His wisdom may determine with what temper and in what name they shall ask his blessing.

And in this point, also, his word gives the only information on which dependence can be placed. The reason of depraved creatures may suppose many things, and attempt to justify them, while it is only infinite reason and wisdom can determine, what is best. The Lord hath informed us that the only acceptable way of coming, is through a mediator who is divine, through his blood which hath made an atonement for sin, through the righteousness of his obedience, through his intercession by which our prayers and intercessions are made acceptable to the Father, through and by the aid of the Holy Spirit, who alone can awaken the conscience, sanctify the heart, and bring us to a reconciliation with God. It is his sacrifice for sin, through which alone we can come to the Father and be accepted. Endeavor therefore to see by faith and by repentance, the efficacy of that blood, which washeth away the guilt of all those who sincerely come to the

Father, through the intercession of him, who is declared to be the beloved Son, in whom the Father is well pleased.

The last part of the direction is of the highest importance, "diligently seek him." For our encouragement, we may believe, that the Lord will accept, and that he hath a reward for those who come to him in a right manner. We have evidence of this, not only in the general scheme of grace contained in the doctrines of the gospel; but, also, in the daily kindness of Providence, in the invitations of the gospel, and in the admonitions of the Holy Spirit, who, frequently, by his own operation, sets before us our need of divine grace. But to derive the benefit of these invitations they must be obeyed. Those only will be accepted who seek God diligently. Although divine grace abounds towards a sinful world, it is a great error to suppose we share in its blessings without self-restraint, watchfulness, prayer and a diligent attendance on the means which are instituted to instruct our minds, and preserve us from sin.

One of the most common errors of the secure, by which they hold themselves in the most imminent danger, is, that they can, at any time, turn and come to God acceptably. They have a conviction that religion and the friendship of God are necessary. They intend to escape the consequences of transgression, but as piety is at present disagreeable, as its duties are irksome, as its restraints on their lives are displeasing, they delay to a future season, that which they have a conviction is

necessary for eternal safety. As they have not a love of piety, so neither are they pleased with the means of religion which infinite wisdom hath instituted. They neglect the word of God; their lives are without prayer; they do not sanctify the sabbath of the Lord; and they slight the ordinances which he hath solemnly instituted for our observance.

But if we neglect to seek God in the ways of his appointment, it is vain to hope that we can come to him, by faith in the day when his help is eminently needed. All the duties and institutions of religion are designed for our assistance in going to the Lord as our Redeemer, they are also intended to impress us with a sense of the need of unfeigned piety, and to cleanse us from that sin which will render us acceptable in his sight.

Thus, my afflicted friend, I have given some directions in answer to your question. "How shall I come to God, how shall I stay myself upon him?" I hope your trials will make you more considerate than you have ever been before.

Commending you to divine grace,
I remain, &c.



Three Dialogues between a Minister and one of his Parishioners, on the True Principles of Religion, and Salvation by Jesus Christ.

(Concluded from p. 389.)

DIALOGUE III.

P. **S**IR, I hope you will not be offended at the trouble

I give you : but I want your advice very much.

M. You need make no compliments, my friend ; I should be glad if all the people in my parish would give me the same trouble as you do. But what is the matter ?

P. I have been for some time so as I was never in my life before : I have been afraid I should be damned. This hath filled me with thoughts and fears, day and night. You had no need to caution me against the danger of worldly cares and pleasures ; for wherever I was, or whatever I have been doing, my sins and hell have still been before my eyes.

M. What have you thought of your sins ? In what light have they appeared to you ?

P. Sins committed many years ago have now risen in my mind, and condemned me. The remembrance of the sins of my youth has followed me, as if committed but yesterday. And some awful scriptures that I have heard and read, seem to be the sentences of my condemnation. I believe I have thought a hundred times of these words, "The wages of sin is death."

M. Have you looked into your heart, and seen and lamented the corruption there ?

P. I did not use to understand what you meant by *looking into the heart* ; but I think I do now. I find in myself a strong inclination to many sins, though I am convinced that I deserve God's wrath on account of complying with this inclination heretofore. Indeed it is much better with me than it was. Formerly, I have been led by my own wicked heart to delight in idle com-

pany ; to talk of myself in a vain empty manner ; to be greedy after the world ; to pass slightly over, or entirely neglect prayer and other duties, as a tedious burden ; and to be guilty of other sins. At present, I bless God, it is not so ; but all my thoughts are, in a manner, taken up about the care of my soul, and the world to come.

M. I fear you do not know your heart so well as you imagine. You seem to think that all things are already become new in you. But be not deceived ; such a cage of unclean birds, as the heart of every man is by nature, is not so soon cleansed from its various lusts and vile affections. Those that seem to be rooted out, are only asleep for a season. Be watchful therefore ; they will one day awake again. Some of them probably are only exchanged for others as bad and dangerous, such as pride, presumption, and the like.

P. Really, Sir, I have some fear of that. For you must know, that one day I was thinking what a sinful wretch I was, and what would become of me in the next world, when these words came strongly into my mind, "I will heal thy backslidings, I will love them freely." I am sure they are somewhere in the bible, but I cannot find them. However, they gave me much comfort, and I have been very easy ever since. Now, a neighbor that I have been talking with, tells me, "this is to be looked on as the work of God," and that I am henceforth to look on myself as a converted man.

But I fear this would be pre-

sumption. Now what do you think of this?

M. I must desire some time to observe your temper and conduct, before I can resolve this question. The words you mentioned are in the prophet, Hosea, chap. xiv. they were, perhaps, spoken more immediately of the restoration of the captive Jews; but they contain a sweet promise perfectly in the gospel strain, and are therefore free for every humble soul to embrace by faith. The prophet, you see, verse 1—3, exhorts the people to repentance and humiliation for sin: "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord. Say unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously—for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy." Now, as God hath given you a sense of your sinful, helpless state, and a desire of turning to him, like this which the prophet describes as preparatory to an answer of peace, I hope the following promise belongs to you: "I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him." I hope too that the comfort which you found in applying the promise to yourself by a particular faith, proceeded from the Spirit of God: in the same manner as I look on that conviction of sin, which filled you with fear and self-abasement, when you called to mind your sinfulness, and God's judgments denounced against sinners, to be the work of the same Spirit. "For it is he who convinceth the world of sin and of righteousness." But this

I must tell you; all these feelings are to be suspected, till we see what fruit follows in the heart and life. For, though these are sometimes owing to the Spirit of God, and come well recommended, when, as in your case, they are so closely connected with the word of God; yet the enemy of souls sometimes imitates these sensible experiences in order to deceive. And it is impossible to say how much our natural tempers and spirits may contribute thereto.

P. Pray, Sir, tell me plainly what you think of my state.—As far as I know of my own heart, I would not willingly offend God for the whole world. I love those that seem to be his servants, and would go upon my hands and knees to do them good, or to make others like them. I love to hear his word, to pray, and to talk of good things; and, I think, I could die with pleasure, if it were his will.

M. Very well. These are good signs. But this is the fervor of your first love. It will not always be so with you. So was it with the Israelites after passing the Red Sea, with the Galatians, and with the church of Ephesus. But each of these grew colder afterwards; and they were reprov'd for it.

P. Sir, I believe you know my danger better than I do myself. Pray, direct me what I shall do.

M. "Strive to make your calling and election sure," and evident both to yourself and others, by "bringing forth the fruits of righteousness in a good conversation."

My first advice is, "walk humbly with thy God." Let

the remembrance of your past life of sin and folly still cover you with shame. Recollect the many aggravating circumstances of a life hitherto spent in rebellion against God; during all which, he daily heaped mercies upon you and yours; giving food and raiment, health and strength; and continued these mercies to you, while you forgot the hand that gave them, and returned evil for good. He spared you in all your provocations, and at last opened your eyes to see your danger, stirred you up to avoid it, and now hath given you a good hope, through grace, for obtaining eternal life. Thus compare together what God hath done and you deserved, and learn humility. Keep a watchful eye also upon the remains of indwelling sin still in you. And let sinful inclinations, vain thoughts, backwardness to duty, and failure in it, teach you to be humble and fear. Thus distrusting yourself, look up to God for continual support, like a helpless little child, expecting through the medium of Jesus Christ, to be assisted in every time of need.

My next advice is, "Keep a conscience void of offence." If you have wronged any man, be not ashamed to own it, and according to your power, make restitution, that the accursed thing may not cleave to you. Take heed that you grieve not the Spirit of God by unholy walking, lest you provoke him to forsake you. To this end, watch over your heart, repress its first inclinations to sin, and be watchful against temptation from without; fixing your eye especially on the sin with which

you have heretofore been most easily beset. If at any time sin prevail against you, do not endeavour to forget it, or hide it in your bosom: but go to God immediately; take shame to yourself; plead the gospel promises to returning sinners, looking unto Jesus Christ as your all sufficient sacrifice and advocate with the Father; and never cease wrestling with God in prayer, until he again speak peace to your troubled soul, and fill you with a greater fear of offending him.

As I hope you are now planted in God's vineyard, be *fruitful*. Bear on your heart a sense of God's love to sinners in Jesus Christ. Consider in particular, what God hath done for you, in "calling you out of darkness into his marvellous light." Remember how you lay fast asleep in sin and fatal security, when God awakened you to see your danger and escape it. Think what would have been your condition in eternity, if God had left you to yourself. Think how many still go on in the same fatal path in which you trod. And let the sense of God's distinguishing love to you excite you to some return. "Love him, because he first loved you." And let love to your heavenly Father influence your *thoughts*, and *words*, and *actions*.

Let your *meditations* of God be sweet and frequent. Lift up your heart to him that seeth in secret, and trieth the heart and reins. Seek a close communion with the Father of your spirit; and to this end, endeavour to withdraw your thoughts from worldly things, and to raise your affections from earth to

heaven, to those things which are not seen, but by the eye of faith. Thus may you walk by faith, guided by it as the eye of the soul, and raised by it to heavenly mindedness, so as to love and delight in God!

Instead of your former vain conversation, henceforth let your tongue be employed to God's glory: in "speaking good of his name;" in thanks and praises to your good benefactor; in telling others "what he hath done for your soul;" in warning sinners of their danger, and encouraging them that fear God to be bold and hearty in his service.

And let your conduct in life be such as becometh the gospel. You are called to fight the good fight of faith; see that you faint not, neither be weary of well-doing. Shew that you are *alive* unto God by *living* unto God; by devoting yourself to his service, and by diligence therein. Do something for him that hath done so much for you. Love all men, for they are the work of God's hands: do good to all according to your ability. Your time and strength, and every other talent are given you to be improved; lay them out in acts of charity and love. Let your heart be enlarged to all men, not excepting your enemies: let these have your prayers and forgiveness, and be ready to overcome evil with good.

See also that you shew the power of godliness in the conscientious discharge of *relative duties*. Be kindly affectionate, and tender-hearted to all about you. To those of your family shew yourself an example of

gentleness, love, and forbearance. Express your regard for their souls as well as their bodies, by a devout, serious course of family worship. Let those of your household, and of your acquaintance, see that you have a new heart by your leading a new life, and studying in all things to be conformed to the will and word of God. Be strict and conscientious in all your dealings. "Render to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute, and custom to whom custom is due," as well as every other lawful debt: not defrauding either the King, or your fellow-subjects, nor any way encouraging those that do.

Shew a particular regard for "them that are of the household of faith," all the sincerely godly, for Christ's sake. For all men were originally created after God's image; in them is this image in some measure restored. These therefore, in a peculiar manner, belong to Christ, being washed from their sins in his blood, and sanctified by his Spirit. And to animate you to greater diligence in this work and labor of love, view often with the eyes of faith the glorious reward set before you, the eternal weight of glory to be bestowed on that day, when Christ shall reward acts of mercy and love done in his name, as if done to himself.

Quickened by this principle, and encouraged by this prospect, strive to grow in knowledge and purity, and faith and love, and fear; in meekness and every christian grace. Study to promote God's glory, the welfare of all men, and such a disposition in your own soul as may render you meet to be a parta-

ker of the inheritance of the saints in light. And in order to promote this work of sanctification in you, wait for God's blessing in a conscientious use of all the means of grace.

P. Sir, I thank you, I see the work before me to be great, but by God's help, I hope I shall be able to hold out to the end.

M. You must expect many difficulties and much opposition. The way to heaven is the way of the cross, and through much tribulation. The world, the flesh, and the devil are strong enemies, and they are closely leagued together. But be not discouraged; God is above all. Christ "ever liveth to make intercession for us;" and to save in every difficulty, "those that come unto God through him." Holy angels will be employed as your guardians; and all the truly godly will be your loving brethren and ready friends. "They that are for you are more than they that are against you."—Be not your own enemy, and nothing can hurt you. However, "be not high minded, but fear." Happy is "the man that feareth always."



From the Christian Observer.

IN a late paper which I addressed to you on undue conformity to the world, I concluded with intimating an intention of sending you some observations on the opposite extreme*.

Strongly as Christians are called upon by their great Lord not to follow a multitude to do evil,

still let them steadily bear in mind, that *singularity* is not Christianity. He who departs most from worldly habits may be as far from God as he who adopts them. The stoics of old were perhaps as much alienated from their Maker, and as widely removed from the character of their Redeemer, as the epicureans: and we are told distinctly by our Lord himself, that the publicans were nearer to the kingdom of heaven than the pharisees. As foul a picture of "the old man" has, no doubt, been frequently exhibited amidst the severities of a cloister, as in the luxury of a court.

Much as the Christian must be on his guard against an undue compliance with the customs of the world, yet, if his conscience be well-informed, and his dispositions right, he will be restrained from needless singularity, both by his judgment and by his taste. By his judgment, from a sense of the trials to which a departure from general usage will expose him. He knows that the world looks on those who are not with her as against her. She cannot easily brooke the tacit reproof she receives from them; and she is prompt to retaliate by subjecting all they do to a severe scrutiny, and by imputing to them improper motives. How ready is the world to charge Christians with folly, pride, inconsistency, and hypocrisy! This indeed gives the true servant of Christ an opportunity of adhering to his revered Master through dishonor no less than through honor; through evil report no less than through good report: and no doubt he finds the troubles brought upon him

* Published in the Connecticut Magazine, page 345.

by his fidelity, a fire of the great refiner, and highly conducive to his purification. But still he will look with apprehension on the trials to which calumny, and even merciless, tho' just, criticism, will expose him. He will be aware how difficult it is to love those who dislike us, and in the spirit of love to return good for evil; and how much he will be tempted in his turn to be forward in condemning the world, and in setting it at defiance. He will also be deeply sensible, that whatever breathes a spirit of opposition to mankind must be revolting to Him who was meek and lowly of heart, and must disgrace instead of adorning his gospel. On this subject his taste will coincide with his judgment. His turn of mind will lead him, if it be possible, to live peaceably with all men. He will wish to avoid notice. He will shrink from contention, and even in the best cause will dislike putting himself into a situation which may oblige him to step forward in his own defence. His choice will be the cool sequestered vale of life, rather than the eminence, or the busy scene; and he will shun, as far as duty will permit, that marked singularity, which may draw him from it. His affection also for his fellow-creatures will engage him to travel with them in the same track when he can. He will feel the same indisposition to pursue a conduct at variance with theirs, that he does to contradict them in conversation. If he is meek, lowly, and affectionate, to do either will require some effort; on many occasions indeed, a slight one; but on

others an effort which will call for a considerable sacrifice of his feelings.

But I may be told, perhaps, that I am only pointing out to Christians the troubles to which they are doomed; for that, if the reasoning in my former paper be sound, they must be subjected every hour, and in almost every action of their lives, to the evils I am now describing. Differing from the world so widely as they do in their objects and principles, how seldom will it be possible for them to agree with it in their practice!

Widely indeed do they differ from others in what must always give the prevailing color both to the character and the life: and woe be to those Christians who labor to lessen this difference; who do not even labor to maintain it! But still, when it has suffered no diminution; when it has neither been sapped nor battered down by the various stratagems and engines which Satan employs against it; it admits, in a variety of particulars, of an agreement in practice between Christians and the world.

1. Nothing forbids this agreement in things indifferent. We can live in houses, and wear a dress, and use a language common in our country. In these and many other points, however they may be obliged to modify their compliance with prevailing usages, in order to preserve their principles inviolate, there will be a general agreement between Christians and the world. Though to a critical eye the scenes displayed by these parties on the canvass will exhibit the marks of differ-

ent schools ; to the superficial observer they will appear so much alike, that they might be thought to have come from the hand of the same master.

And ought not this to be so ? Nothing would be gained, but much lost, by differing from our contemporaries in things of no moment. In addition to the general arguments which have been advanced in favor of agreeing, when we can, with those around us, it may be remarked, in reference to the particular case now before us, that to slide on in the common course will always cost least time and attention : and surely a creature so short lived and so limited in his capacity as man, and yet having so stupendous a work before him during his continuance in this world, is bound to reserve his time and attention as much as may be for objects of importance. Further : what ought a Christian to have most at heart in his intercourse with mankind ? To persuade them to become new creatures, by renouncing those desires and pursuits which are most natural to them, and fixing their affections on others of a very different kind. If then he is to hold forth religion as demanding so great a change, will he debase its dignity, and frustrate its operation, by leading men to look upon it as solicitous about mere trifles ? If in his divine embassy (for we are all, in a sense more or less emphatic, ambassadors of Christ) so many points of collision between him and the world must necessarily occur on the most momentous topics, will he court disagreement and debate by urg-

ing petty claims, and those of the most disputable nature ?

2. But even in things of real importance, the religious and the irreligious man, though arguing from different premises, will often arrive at the same conclusion, and be led to similar conduct. Religion is the highest wisdom, and best promotes the true welfare of mankind, temporal as well as eternal. Man always attends to his temporal interest at least, and lays down a code of maxims, which become current in the world, for promoting it. Though lamentably misled by his contracted views, his wrong dispositions, and his false estimate of things, yet the paths which lead to present misery and present happiness are frequently so strongly marked as not to be mistaken for each other. Thus dishonesty, falsehood, cruelty, ingratitude, are reprobated, and the opposite qualities are honored, by the worldly man as well as by the Christian, who will both join in endeavors to discountenance and punish the one, and to encourage the other. Both the worldly man and the Christian will be sensible of the advantages arising from the cultivation of the understanding, the acquisition of knowledge, the preservation of health, the prudent management of property : and there will be considerable similarity in the means they employ for attaining these common objects. In short, worldly prudence, that baser currency, as it is somewhere called, by which the business of life is carried on with tolerable regularity by numbers who are not possessed of genuine religion, the only true coin ;

—worldly prudence, in many particulars, so far answers the purposes of the sterling gold, as to admit of persons possessed of these very different kinds of wealth travelling on amicably together in some parts of their journey, pursuing, the same objects, and joining in the same measures.

3. But in many cases in which the Christian thinks common usages inexpedient, and even to a certain degree mischievous, he will find it best to comply with them. Why? Because he will find it more inexpedient or mischievous to depart from them. What, considered in itself, is not best, often becomes best under existing circumstances. No calculation of consequences should ever induce a Christian to violate the divine commands. But supposing different lines of conduct, involving no such violation, to be presented to his choice, that will be entitled to the preference which is best calculated to promote his own salvation and the glory of God. And is it not evident, how much times and circumstances must influence his decision in a case of this kind? If I have a great work in hand, and find it necessary to call in the mechanical powers to my aid, I must adapt my machine to the nature of the ground, and must bear in mind various particulars which happen to apply to the case before me. In many cases the machine which suits me best may be one neither cheap nor simple, nor likely to obtain the suffrage of a student in his closet.

Now of the different subordinate considerations which ought

to influence human conduct, few demand more attention than common usage. It often operates on human affairs in a way not unlike that which the superstition of former times attributed to the planets; shedding on them a benign or baneful influence according to the aspect it wears. When it frowns on any one, what obstacles does it throw in his way; to what trials does it subject him; to what misconceptions and prejudices on the part of others does it expose him! Suppose I were to determine to rise regularly at four, and retire to rest at eight, and were to fix on corresponding hours for my meals, thinking (as perhaps I may) that this course would be more conducive to health, usefulness, and enjoyment, than that generally pursued: what would be the consequence? I should subject myself and all my friends to very great inconvenience. My hours for business would be theirs for eating or for relaxation, and *vice versa*. A solicitor would bring me deeds to execute when I was sitting down to dinner: and an old friend, who promised himself a social breakfast with me, and a long morning, would find my breakfast over two or three hours before his arrival, and would have the mortification to see preparations making for my dinner soon after he had drank his comfortless dish of tea, and had entered on conversation. I should be so perpetually crossed and jostled by custom, when I adhered to my plan, and cases would so perpetually occur in which I should be obliged to depart from it, that I should probably find it adverse

both to health, and to usefulness, and to enjoyment, and should be forced to abandon it as falsifying all my expectations. Thus, without reaping any advantages from my experiment, I should have incurred a good deal of censure as whimsical and unaccommodating, if not also as rude and inhospitable; and I should have run the risk of retaliating on the world in my thoughts if not in my language, and of admitting into my religion a certain tinge of rigorous criticism, adverse to that love for all mankind, which, next to the love of God, ought to be its prevailing color. On proper occasions these evils must be fearlessly encountered. But, from various causes which I have not time to enumerate, they will be far greater when incurred on insufficient grounds; and then also their effects will be much more formidable from an additional cause of the highest importance, namely, that the same measure of the divine blessing cannot be expected in this case, as when the individual is clearly moving in the line of his duty.

But let me guard against being thought to concede, that, through the different causes which have been mentioned, the plan of life of the Christian will in practice differ little from that of other men; at least from that of the sober and decorous part of the world. His principles are as far removed from those even of the most sober and most decorous worldling as light from darkness; and if he is faithful to them, it is impossible but that his life, even in its general complexion, and as viewed by the world, must differ essentially

from theirs. His universal obedience to the divine commands, while their obedience will be more or less partial:—his earnest cultivation of some dispositions which they will little value; and his earnest struggle against others which they will not dread, or perhaps will even cherish:—the peculiar and urgent calls, arising from his Christian principles, on his purse and on his time:—and, not least, the very *taste* created by his religion, and operating powerfully on his choice of friends, of amusements, and even of business:—all these things will separate him widely from the men of this world, and “Form a life whose holy springs, though hidden” in a great measure from public view, will give no dubious signs of their reality and force; however their nature may be mistaken or misrepresented.

If what has been advanced in this and my former letter, respecting the evils on the one hand of undue compliances with the world, and on the other of needless singularity, be well-founded; with what circumspection should we steer our course through life! The first great question ought always to be, what does the law of God forbid? And the second, of all that it permits, what promises most advantage to ourselves, to our immediate connections, and to the world around us? Let these questions be fairly put, and honestly answered.

But though honestly, they may be rashly answered, unless we are well aware of the temptations to extremes which abound on every side. Those to improper singularity are neither few nor weak. While fidelity to our

great Lord is always pleaded in vindication of a departure from worldly habits, how often is a conviction forced upon us, that a want of love for mankind, or perhaps even some contempt for those who are of a different sect; that a sense, if not an ostentatious display, of superiority; that a fear of the censure, and a love of the commendation of this or that class of religionists; that a superstitious regard for certain singularities of inferior importance, as if they were essentials in religion:—how often is a conviction forced upon us, that these, or other unhallowed causes, have had no small influence on the mind!

On the other hand, how many and great are our temptations to swim with the stream of the world! If, indeed, we live in a little set of our own way of thinking in religion, this set will be the world to us, and we shall proceed most smoothly when we move in unison with it. Our *little* world will be every thing to us, and we must not think that we make a sacrifice when we adopt its customs, and depart from those of the *great* world. But if our situation in life calls us to mix much with mankind at large, a departure from common usages will subject us almost every day to rubs and annoyances, and our love of ease will urge many an ingenious argument for falling into the habits of our neighbors. Add to this, that the system of the world is built on the natural propensities to man. It is expressly calculated to accord with those dispositions and feelings which are most congenial to him. Its very object is to gratify the desires of

his heart. Can it then fail to meet with powerful advocates within us? How often will craving appetites shelter themselves under some of the arguments against improper singularity, and with a display of zeal for the cause of God and Christ prove dangerous traitors at the council-board? Nay, even some of the most eminent Christian graces will range themselves on the same side, unless duly tempered and modified by others of a different character. Humility will be prone to distrust her own decisions when they appear to be singular; and meekness and gentleness will not fail to insist on the evils arising from being made a theme of conversation, and from being called upon to encounter criticism and obloquy.

Amidst these difficulties and dangers, (of which little more than a brief sketch has been attempted,) how shall the Christian find the right path, and keep it when found? Let him apply earnestly to his God for help. Let him study the character of his Saviour, and both the precepts and the spirit of the sacred volume. And let him, in that frame of mind which God bestows on those who diligently seek him and search his word, take a careful survey of all the personal and local circumstances which ought to influence his decision. If all this be rightly done, he may hope to be preserved from dangerous errors, and to be so guided and blessed in his course as to promote his own salvation and God's glory.

R. S.

The Report of the Trustees to the Hampshire Missionary Society, at their Annual Meeting, holden at Northampton, August 25, A. D. 1808.

THE Trustees of the Hampshire Missionary Society, with sentiments of gratitude to the Preserver of men, congratulate their brethren on the arrival of the seventh anniversary of their Institution. They notice, with humble thanksgiving, the unmerited goodness of their Heavenly Father, in the gracious protection he has afforded to the members of the Society, and the numerous benefits he has conferred upon them, in their endeavors to extend the privileges of the gospel to their brethren in the infant settlements and plantations of the United States. The Trustees gratefully record the mercy of God, in preserving the lives of all whom the Society has entrusted with the management of their concerns from the beginning to the present day, with the exception of two members of the Auditing Committee, appointed at the last annual meeting, Gen. Jonathan Woodbridge, and Deac. Nathaniel Ely, brethren dearly beloved, piously devoted to the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, and eminently useful in forwarding the benevolent designs of this charitable Association.

With painful regret the Trustees also notice the removal of several other useful and important members, who by their liberalities, prayers and exertions, have aided the labors of the Society for the salvation of souls.*

* Simeon Strong, Esq. of Amherst, 1st Parish—Elijah Clary, of Conway

THEY HAVE DISPERSED; THEY HAVE GIVEN TO THE POOR: THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL BE IN EVERLASTING REMEMBRANCE. Precious is their memory to survivors. Many, instructed by their pious example, shall be quickened, through the grace of God, to go and do likewise.

Through the favor of Heaven, this Missionary Institution, promising in its beginnings, has increased beyond the sanguine expectations of the Trustess. Wonderful and animating has been the success which the blessed Jesus has afforded to his own cause. From year to year liberal funds have been furnished, and able and faithful Missionaries have been found and employed, to the growing reputation of the Society, to the comfort and joy of believers in the infant and destitute settlements of this country, and to the conviction and renovation of perishing sinners, who will ever bless God for the pious labors of this Society, for their salvation.

With pleasing satisfaction the Trustess make mention of the grace of the Redeemer, that in the progress of the Society, he has opened the hearts of his female disciples in this county, to form charitable associations, for the purpose of obtaining funds to be applied in the pur-

—Joseph Barnard, of Deerfield—Oliver Smith, of Hadley—David Billings, of Hatfield—Silas Billings, do. Seth Graves, do. Nathaniel Ely, Long Meadow—Levi Shepherd, Northampton—John Long, Shelburne—Samuel Lyman, Springfield—William Pyncheon, do. Rev. Joseph Strong, Williamsburgh—Francis Marsh, do. Jonathan Woodbridge, Esq. Worthington, William Gove, jun. do.

chase and distribution of bibles, and other pious Christian writings, among the needy inhabitants of the new settlements, and under the direction of the Society; and hath raised up many other liberal and pious benefactors, in more distant parts, who have brought their free will offerings to Christ, and have increased the funds and ability of this Institution.

In the first six years of the Society have been expended, in forwarding their great object, dolls. 5598,92. There have been paid into the treasury, dolls. 7854,73. By these receipts, and the skilful management of the funds by the Treasurer, there were remaining in the treasury, at the last annual meeting, dolls. 2572,32; also, dolls. 100,25, and a valuable collection of books, for future distribution, in the hands of the 'Trustees' Committee.

Having given this summary of the Society's concerns, for the first six years, the Trustees, in compliance with the obligation imposed on them by the constitution, beg leave to report the transactions and events of the seventh year.

The missionaries previously appointed, and who were engaged in the service of the Society, at the last annual meeting, returned from their labors the passed year. By their letters and journals, and by letters from those among whom they have labored, they appear to have fulfilled their missions with an exemplary fidelity, activity and zeal, and with a patient self-denial. They travelled over extensive regions of the new settlements, seeking for places and

opportunities where they might do good to the souls of men, and honor the grace of the Divine Redeemer. They were constant in preaching, in the administration of the holy sacraments, in settling difficulties in churches already established, in forming new churches, in holding religious and church conferences, in visiting and instructing schools, in comforting the sick and afflicted, in assisting mourners, by their prayers and counsels, submissively, to bury their dead; in going from house to house, to teach the people the good knowledge of God. In addition to these services, and the diligent distribution of books, they preached nearly as many discourses as they spent days on missionary ground. The whole number of sermons they delivered, being six hundred and ninety-one. The Trustees and the Society will give God thanks, that their missionaries have been faithful in their trust. Nor may the kind and grateful reception they met with from the people, be passed over in silence. Cordial was the welcome given to them by the needy and scattered inhabitants of those new and destitute settlements. Lively joy was impressed upon the countenances of Christ's children in the wilderness, and a general and solemn attention to their labors, was yielded by the people whom they visited.— There was the evidence of serious and useful effects upon the hearts and lives of not a few, who were favored with the instructions and counsels of the missionaries of this Society.

The laborers employed were the Rev. Messrs. David H. Wil-

liston, and Alvan Saunderson, for thirty-one weeks each, in the District of Maine, in the counties of Oxford and Kennebeck, and the towns near the eastern boundary of Kennebec. They began their mission about the middle of March, and ended it after the middle of October, 1807. Having labored diligently, with apparent success, and with much activity and zeal, they returned in safety, at the close of their term, with the pleasing hope, that they had not labored in vain, nor spent their strength for nought. On their mission, they received for the funds of the Society, dolls. 16, 96.

The Rev. Royal Phelps and Mr. Ebenezer Wright, performed a mission of twelve and an half weeks each, in the state of New-York, county of St. Lawrence, and were eleven weeks on missionary ground, indefatigably employed in their Master's work. Peculiar were the tokens of friendship and of a welcome reception among the inhabitants of that new and thinly inhabited county. Seldom have the Society been encouraged by such ardent and grateful acknowledgments of their kindness in sending missionaries and books, as have flowed from the lips and the pens of the people in St. Lawrence. Messrs. Phelps and Wright received in contributions and donations to the funds, dolls. 54, 70.

Rev. Elijah Lyman, of Brookfield, Vermont, and Mr. Walter Chapin, performed a mission, the first of ten, and the other of twelve weeks, in the destitute towns of the northern counties in Vermont. They performed many labors, and were blessed with hopeful success. On their

mission were contributed to the funds, dolls. 6, 66; and 50 dollars, by the town of Brookfield, and several ministers and parishes in that vicinity, who generously supplied Mr. Lyman's pulpit, in his absence.

A particular inspection of the letters and journals of the missionaries, evinces the necessitous condition of the inhabitants of the new settlements; their threatening danger from sectaries, from those instructions which cause to err, from divisions, and from the habit of living without stated preaching, and the regular administration of Christian ordinances. Their situation, aiding the natural estrangement of the human heart from God, and its opposition to evangelical doctrines and Christian morality, does most importunately urge upon Christians, able and well disposed, to succor them in their distress, and to help them in obtaining the truths of the gospel, and the gracious offers of sanctification, pardon, and peace, through the Divine Redeemer.

Great have been the benefits which this Society has conferred, by their missionaries, by bibles and pious writings, upon their poor and destitute brethren.— Cheerful has been the reception which their missionaries almost without exception, have experienced, in the diverse remote and extensive countries, through which they have passed.

They have given life and joy to the sincere, the considerate and pious. They have summoned the attention of the immoral and thoughtless, to the concerns of religion, and the safety of their souls. They

have been hopefully blessed in bringing home some poor sinners to Christ. While the zeal of the Society has been commendable and exemplary, in providing and employing means for spreading, diffusively, the knowledge of Christ, merciful have been the tokens, that God hath accepted and approved their work, in the fruits of his grace, and in the operations of his Spirit, as well among the favorers and patrons of this missionary institution, as among the people in the new settlements. God hath rewarded his own grace in the hearts of his people here, and has extended the benefit to remote and far distant parts. He has put the song of Zion into the mouths of those who have long sat mourning and solitary in a wilderness land.

Encouraged by former success and furnished by the liberalities of the pious and charitable, the Trustees have extended their operations the present year.—They have enlarged their appropriations for missionary labors, and for sending the gospel to the pagan nations of this land: Finding that Christ has a treasure in the hearts of his people which the necessities of their brethren easily draw forth, the Trustees have hazarded the inconveniences which embarrass the pecuniary concerns of the people, and have resolved not only to continue but to augment their labors and expenditures. How far the hopes and the wishes of the Trustees have been realized in the course of providence will appear in the remainder of this report.

The Missionaries employed the present season, are Rev.

Messrs. David H. Williston, and Seth Smith, jun. for thirty weeks each, in the destitute towns and plantations of the District of Maine, where their best discretion shall guide them. Their mission began on the last of February. They have entered on their labors with a welcome and joyful reception, and good hopes of success.

Messrs. John Woodbridge, and Ebenezer Wright, set out about the middle of May, on a mission of twenty weeks each, to be performed partly in the country lying between Black River, and the lakes Oneida and Ontario, and partly in the county of St. Lawrence. They have performed the first part of their mission with much acceptance. Mr. Woodbridge, through bodily infirmity, has been necessitated to return. Mr. Wright has gone forward into the county of St. Lawrence.—Mr. Woodbridge states, That on his mission he has met with a friendly reception from the people, who expressed their gratitude to the Society for their liberal kindness, and with diligent and solemn attention listened to his ministrations.

Rev. Gardner Kellogg, of Bradford, Vermont, for ten weeks, and Mr. Newton Skinner, for twelve weeks, have gone on a mission into the northern counties of Vermont. They commenced their labors the first week in August, with flattering prospects of good success.

The Trustees by their committee have sent out a greater supply of books, than in preceding years, a list of which is annexed in No. 1

In prosecuting the wishes of the society, the Trustees by their Committee have expended dolls. 1273,64. The several items of this expenditure, are inserted in the annexed paper, No. 2.

The receipts, for the funds of the Society, which have come into the hands of the Trustees' Committee, the items of which are contained in the annexed paper, No. 3, are dolls. 1242,81 1-2; besides which sum the Treasurer has obtained one dividend on ten shares of fire and marine insurance stock in Boston, whole nominal value of the shares being dolls. 500, at 12 1-2 per cent, being dolls. 62,50.— The Society have entrusted with an Agent at Utica, New York, 52 dollars, which is to be brought into the Treasury, and there is with the Trustees' Committee, a valuable collection of books for future distribution, a list of which accompanies this Report in the annexed paper, No. 1.

The Trustees, affected with gratitude to the pious and liberal donors and patrons of this missionary establishment, would inform the Society, that the Hon. William Philips, Esq. of Boston, has, in addition to two preceding donations of 50 dollars each, given 50 dollars to the funds; the Charitable Female Society, of Whitestown, New York, have in addition to their liberality in 1806, of 119 dollars, given to the funds of this Society the passed year, 140 dollars; The Treasurer has also received ten shares in the stock of the Fire and Marine Insurance Company, in Boston, bequeathed to the Society by Richard Devens,

Esq. late of Charlestown, deceased, in his last Will and Testament, nominal value 50 dollars each share, and have also assurance from the Executors of Mr. Devens' Will, that they will pay to the Society, the sum of 500 dollars, as a donation from the surviving grand children, nineteen in number, residuary legatees of Mr. Devens, in order most scrupulously to fulfil what they supposed might have been the benevolent and pious intention of their venerable and worthy grand father, at the time when he made his will, and that his legacy to the Society of ten shares, may be of the value of 1000 dollars. These several donations from the pious and munificent Benefactors, as they evince the devotion of their hearts to the interests of Christ's kingdom, and the salvation of men and are pledges of their confidence in the good intentions of this Society, so they will excite in the hearts of its members, praise and thanksgiving to God, who has all hearts in his hands, and affectionate feelings of gratitude and esteem towards those distinguished characters, who have with such promptitude and munificence, furnished means and aids to the Society's exertions for building up the kingdom of the adorable Immanuel.

The Trustees further report, that the virtuous members of the Charitable Female Association in this county, have the passed year, given fresh proofs of their attachment to the Redeemer's cause, and their earnest wishes for the happiness and salvation of those in the new settlements, who are famishing for want of light and instruction in divine

things. They have continued to render essential aids to those funds of the Society which are devoted to the purchase and distribution of bibles, and other pious books in the new settlements. While these daughters of Zion are making the wilderness and solitary places to rejoice and blossom with the rose of gospel light and grace, may they reap a rich reward in the favor of him to whom they have so kindly administered by relieving him in his poor and suffering members. May their charities be their memorial in time to come.

The statement concerning the funds of the Charitable Female Association, is contained in the accompanying paper, No. 4.

The Trustees in their feelings have ever coincided with the tender sentiments of the other members of the Society towards the poor, perishing natives of this land, who continue to grope in pagan darkness and idolatry. They have formerly expended something to promote the education of two Indian youths, in a hope that God would prepare them for usefulness, and open a door for their improvement among their brethren and kindred. In this hope the Trustees faint not. There have been appropriated the preceding and former year, 64 dollars, for the benefit of the Western Indians, but no door has been opened for the useful expenditure of more than 14 dollars. The Trustees, however, look forward with consoling anticipation, that the time will come speedily, when means may be profitably used for bringing the

American Indians into the fold of Christ.

For the present state of the Treasury, and funds of the Society, the Trustees refer to the annexed paper, No. 5, containing the Report of the Auditing Committee, upon the accounts of the Treasurer, and the Trustees' Committee.

The Trustees upon this occasion solicit the particular attention of the Society to the present situation of their funds, as far as they depend upon the subscriptions of individuals.—When the Society commenced its operations, their funds were mainly created by the subscriptions of various individuals.—Some pledged themselves to pay a definite sum by a single payment. Others pledged themselves to pay a certain sum, annually, in January of each year, for the term of seven years. Individuals who subscribed and paid ten dollars, or more, became members of the Society for seven years and ever after so long as they should pay two dollars yearly. Others subscribed two dollars or more to be paid annually for seven years, by which subscriptions they were constituted members of the Society for seven years, and ever after so long as they should pay two dollars annually. The term of membership with the first subscribers will end next January, and in case of their not continuing their membership, the funds of the Society will be diminished in proportion to the numbers who may choose to discontinue their payments of two dollars annually. The whole sum yearly received from subscribing members in times pas-

sed, has been between 400 and 500 dollars. The failure of this resource must produce a serious deficiency in the means of the Society, for future operations. The Trustees entertain a hope and expectation, that many of those who have so generously and promptly afforded their assistance in raising to usefulness and dignity this spiritual building, for Christ, will continue their support, by retaining their membership in the Society. They will foster their own work which they have wrought in Christ Jesus, and will uphold so good a cause on which the sanctification and happiness of so many precious souls may depend. The Trustees urge these considerations upon the hearts of the friends of this pious and useful Institution.

Much important good to the interests of virtue and religion hath been already done by the laudable and disinterested charities and labors of this Society, and by the liberal benefactors to its funds. Still greater and more extensive are the blessings contemplated by the Trustees, from the future exertions, prayers and liberalities of the Society.

Let those, therefore, who love our Lord Jesus, and look for the salvation of souls, by the instrumentality of his word and ministrations, arise and work. Let them, confidently, wait for a blessing from him, who ever regards those labors of love, which are wrought for his disciples, and to bring in subjects to his kingdom. He will never suffer the pious exertions and prayers of his children to return empty. Behold the fields, they are already white and ripe for the harvest.

How numerous are these fields for missionary labors! How rich and abundant, may we hope, will be the future harvest, provided we and others put our hands to this work, and come to the help of the Lord in this season of exigency. When other missionary institutions are zealously going forward with this work, do not our hearts beat in unison with theirs, and say—We will go also. Do we see the blessed effects and fruits of our former prayers and labors in the establishment of Churches, and the settlement of Ministers in the new settlements of our country? Let us bless God for the benefit, and lift up our eyes and look around and beyond those favored churches, and see new plantations multiplying in the wilderness, unable to relieve their own wants, wants more numerous than all the copious supplies of Missionary Societies can at present satisfy. May the good Spirit of God, enlighten all in duty, and excite them to offer their faculties and their gifts to Christ, that they may promote the common salvation, and extend the blessings of his kingdom to all parts of the world; that those who sit in darkness may see a great light, that the name of our Jesus may be known upon earth, and his saving health, unto all nations; and that the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ.

The Trustees propose to the Society for their consideration, the following Resolutions, viz.

1. That a committee be appointed to consider the claims of the Society upon any individual or individuals, who are by

subscription indebted to it, and where they find any of said subscribers who in their opinion cannot make payment without laying themselves under material embarrassments, that the Committee be empowered to remit payment, and discharge the Society's claim.

2. That a Committee be appointed to take such measures as they may judge most expedient to ascertain, who of the present members of the Society, will continue their relation to it, after the present year, and to pursue such other measures as may most substantially remedy any deficiency in the funds, which may result from the termination of the annuities, which in former years have been paid by subscribers.

3. That the Recording Secretary report to the Society, as soon as may be, all those individuals who may have contributed to the funds, a sum of twenty-five dollars, that they may be nominated to the Society, to be admitted as members for life.

4. That the President be requested to transmit, in behalf of the Society, a letter of thanks to the executors of the last will and testament of Richard Devens, Esq. late of Charlestown, deceased, and to the heirs and the residuary legatees of said Richard Devens, Esq. in grateful acknowledgment of the pious liberality of the deceased, and the exemplary generosity of

his grand children to this Society.—Also, a letter of thanks to the Charitable Female Society of Whitestown, New-York, for the confidence they have reposed in this Society, by their liberal contributions to its funds; also, a letter of thanks to the Hon. William Philips, Esq, of Boston, for his several liberal donations to this Society.

5. That the several Congregational and Presbyterian ministers in this county, be requested to read, or cause to be read, this report in their congregations; and that the several religious assemblies, in connection with this Society, be requested to make a contribution for the Society's funds, upon the next annual Thanksgiving, or upon some Lord's day, near that time as shall be most convenient.

6. That the Trustees take order for the printing and distribution of this report, to the several congregations in connection with this Society, and to the Charitable Female Association, in each town.

In the name of the Trustees.
CALEB STRONG, *President*.

This Report was read, considered, and accepted by the Society.
Attest. PAYSON WILLISTON, *Recording Secretary*.

Note. The reader will perceive that the preceding Report refers to a number of documents which will not be printed in this Magazine, unless by particular desire,

POETRY.

Have Faith in God.

SHALL Man on ocean's fluctuant wave,
Trust to the fragile bark his form?

Securely skim the watery grave,
Defy the winds, and brave the storm ?

Or with wing'd coursers o'er the plain,
Fly fearless, and for safety trust
Th' unstable steed or brittle rein,
And Korah's treacherous base—the dust ?

To arms when passion wakes the war,
To helmet, shield, or wall, or flood,
On numbers or position dare,
And know and trust no other God ?

And shall the saint distrust the pow'r,
Who form'd these waves, whose mercies keep,
At whose command these tempests roar,
And oceans roll, and billows sleep ?

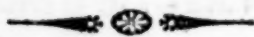
Who governs and controls at will,
The flying steed with unseen rein ;
And guides to rescue or to kill,
Makes adamant, or cleaves the plain ?

By many or by few who saves,
When battle burns, and foes assail,
Arms stones with death, a shepherd braves,
Or bleating herds-horns bids prevail ?

Trust, ye of little faith this pow'r,
His weakness all man's strength outvies ;
His skill mysterious every hour
Display'd, the food of faith supplies.

In all your straits, in all your ways,
Lean on the LORD—'tis safe for you,
Nor doubt his pow'r or truth or grace,
Tho' earth oppose, or hell pursue.

See Abra'm thus from bondage free,
Yield Zion's hopes on Zion's hill,
'Gainst hope to God's sure promise flee,
And trust his goodness to fulfil.



Donations to the Missionary Society of Connecticut.

1808.

- Oct. 17. Received of Rev. Calvin Ingalls, being
amount contributed in new settlements, col-
lected by him.....\$ 17 23
19. Received of Hudson and Goodwin, being in
part balance of their account of Evangelical
Magazines.....56 57